

**Award Numbers:** W81XWH-15-1-0701

**Title:** Improving Acceptance, Integration, and Health Among LGBT Service Members

**Principal Investigators:** Carl Castro, PhD

**Contracting Organizations:** University of Southern California  
Los Angeles, CA 90089

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# REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

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**14. ABSTRACT**

The goal of this proposal is to (a) determine the extent to which lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) service members report feelings of acceptance and integration into the military and their units post-Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT); (b) describe the composition and structure of LGBT service members supportive social networks; (c) determine if there are differences in behavioral health patterns among LGBT service members compared to their heterosexual counterparts and across military branch; and (d) develop a set of actionable recommendations for the Department of Defense aimed at improving the integration of LGBT service members into the military and the current system of health care and support, if needed. This project has two phases. In Phase 1 we (a) convened an expert panel to advise the study and (b) interview a diverse set of military service members (n=60) using a semi-structured Life History Calendar approach to develop a set of culturally appropriate measures for use in Phase 2. In Phase 2, after the formative processes are in place, we will recruit LGBT (n=240) and heterosexual (n=240) service-members for participation in a quantitative survey using respondent driven sampling (RDS) through a matched cohort design. To date, we have convened our expert panel of advisors and have completed 38 interviews with LGBT military service members.

**15. SUBJECT TERMS**

Military, LGBT, health disparities, minority stress, social networks

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## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

Approximately 3% of military personnel across all service branches identify as LGBT. Although the bans on LGBT individuals serving openly in the military have been officially lifted, it has not become significantly easier for most of these individuals to serve openly. A culture of non-acceptance – established prior to the lifting of the bans – remains alive and well, with some LGBT service members experiencing interpersonal and institutional discrimination, marginalization, and rejection. The cumulative effect of these stressors on LGBT service members is poorly understood, with very little data available on the unique physical and mental health needs of this community. This project includes LGBT service members from all four services, Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps.

The Improving Acceptance, Integration, and Health among LGBT Service Members or the Military Acceptance Project (MAP) aims to:

- a) Evaluate LGBT service members' level of acceptance and integration into the military.
- b) Describe the composition and structure of LGBT service members' social networks.
- c) Measure differences in health disparities relative to LGBT service members' heterosexual counterparts.
- d) Develop actionable recommendations to facilitate acceptance and integration of LGBT service members into the military and reduce identified health disparities.

This project has two phases. In Phase 1 we (a) convened an expert panel to advise the study and (b) interview a diverse set of military service members (n=60) using a semi-structured Life History Calendar approach to develop a set of culturally appropriate measures for use in Phase 2. In Phase 2, after the formative processes are in place, we will recruit LGBT (n=240) and heterosexual (n=240) service-members for participation in a quantitative survey using respondent driven sampling (RDS) through a matched cohort design.

## **2. KEYWORDS:** military, LGBT, health disparities, minority stress, social networks

## **3. ACCOMPLISHMENTS:**

### **What were the major goals of the project?**

The major goals of the project, as outlined above, are to (a) determine the extent to which lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) service members report feelings of acceptance and integration into the military and their units post-Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT); (b) describe the composition and structure of LGBT service members supportive social networks; (c)

determine if there are differences in behavioral health patterns among LGBT service members compared to their heterosexual counterparts and across military branch; and (d) develop a set of actionable recommendations for the Department of Defense aimed at improving the integration of LGBT service members into the military and the current system of health care and support, if needed.

**What was accomplished under these goals?**

To date, we have received Institutional Review Board Approval from USC, UCLA, and HRPO, convened our expert advisory panel, conducted life history calendar interviews, and conducted social network interviews. To date, we have completed 38 interviews with LGBT military service members. Of those service members interviewed, 9 are serving in the Army, 11 in the Navy, 15 in the Air Force, and 3 in the Marines. We have also completed 22 social network interviews. Of these service members, 10 are serving in the Air Force, 6 in the Navy, 4 in the Army, and 2 in the Marines.

**What opportunities for training and professional development has the project provided?**

This project involves several doctoral students at USC and UCLA. To date we have trained 6 doctoral students as interviewers. This training includes research interview skill building and culturally competent interviewing techniques.

**How were the results disseminated to communities of interest?**

We regularly update our expert advisory panel on the progress of our study.

**What do you plan to do during the next reporting period to accomplish the goals?**

During the next reporting period we plan to conclude qualitative interviewing of LGBT military service members and finalize study instruments for phase 2 of our research. Once measures are finalized we will recruit LGBT (n=240) and heterosexual (n=240) service-members for participation in a quantitative survey using respondent driven sampling (RDS) through a matched cohort design.

**4. IMPACT:**

**What was the impact on the development of the principal discipline(s) of the project?**

This project is among the first to understand the experiences of active duty LGBT service members. The results stand to impact the field of social work/social welfare in significant ways. The combination of life history calendar interviews and social network interviews allow for a depth of understanding about the life experiences of study participants. The data

gleaned from this project will inform programs and policies that impact LGBT people in the armed services.

**What was the impact on other disciplines?**

Related disciplines include public health, public policy, sociology, psychology and others. The findings from this project will provide critical information on how to develop effective interventions to ensure the acceptance and integration of sexual minorities into traditional heterosexual work environments. Further, the findings will address possible health disparities that might exist amongst LGBT individuals and heterosexual individuals and possible ways to overcome these disparities.

**What was the impact on technology transfer?**

Nothing to report.

**What was the impact on society beyond science and technology?**

This research will provide the first known documentation of the extent to which LGBT service members feel supported and accepted by the military and provide the Department of Defense with a clear set of actionable recommendations that can be used to inform the development of early interventions to promote health and well-being among LGBT service members and improve unit cohesion. The military has always been a leader in understanding and implementing gender and racial integration into its workforce, this study will be another example of how acceptance and integration can be achieved that other organizations and communities might model.

**5. CHANGES/PROBLEMS:**

**Changes in approach and reasons for change**

Nothing to report

**Actual or anticipated problems or delays and actions or plans to resolve them**

We are well on our way to achieving our goal of 60 life history interviews. While we experienced slight delays in the recruitment of active duty LGBT service members, our efforts have picked up in recent months and we do not anticipate this interfering with the timely completion of our project.

**Changes that had a significant impact on expenditures**

Nothing to report

**Significant changes in use or care of human subjects, vertebrate animals, biohazards, and/or select agents**

Nothing to report

**Significant changes in use or care of human subjects**

Nothing to report

**Significant changes in use or care of vertebrate animals.**

Nothing to report

**Significant changes in use of biohazards and/or select agents**

Nothing to report

**6. PRODUCTS:**

**Publications, conference papers, and presentations**

Goldbach, J.T. & Castro, C.A. (2016). Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) service members. *Current Psychiatry Reports*, 18, 1-7. DOI 10.1007/s11920-016-0695-0

Castro, C. A. & Goldbach, J. (2016). Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Service Members: Life After Don't Ask, Don't Tell. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association, Atlanta, Georgia, May.

**Website(s) or other Internet site(s)**

<http://cir.usc.edu/research/research-projects/military-acceptance-project-map>

**Technologies or techniques**

Nothing to report

**Inventions, patent applications, and/or licenses**

**Other Products**

Nothing to report

**7. PARTICIPANTS & OTHER COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS**

o **What individuals have worked on the project?**

Name:	Carl Castro, PhD
Project Role:	Co-Principal Investigator
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	2.0
Contribution to Project:	Project oversight, led LHC development, hired and trained staff, 6 doctoral students trained to conduct interviews, and analysis of

	qualitative data
Funding Support:	25%

Name:	Jeremy Goldbach, PhD, LMSW
Project Role:	Co-Principal Investigator
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	3.0
Contribution to Project:	Project oversight, leading LHC interview analyses and development of LGBT minority stressor scale
Funding Support:	25%

Name:	Ian Holloway, PhD, MSW, MPH
Project Role:	Co-Principal Investigator
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	2.0
Contribution to Project:	Project oversight, social network interview supervision
Funding Support:	25%

Name:	Henry Fisher Raymond, DrPH
Project Role:	Co-Investigator
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	1.0
Contribution to Project:	Assistance with sampling and evaluation methodologies
Funding Support:	10%

Name:	Sheree Schrager, PhD, MS
Project Role:	Co-Investigator
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	2.0
Contribution to Project:	Assistance with evaluation and analysis methodologies

Funding Support:	20%
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Name:	Richard Fay, MEd
Project Role:	Project Coordinator
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	9.0
Contribution to Project:	Project management, training of interviewers, recruitment and enrollment, coordination of data collection activities
Funding Support:	100%

Name:	Ashley Schuyler, MPH
Project Role:	Project Coordinator
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	N/A
Contribution to Project:	Project management, recruitment and enrollment, coordination of data collection activities
Funding Support:	50% starting October 1, 2016

Name:	Sean Beougher, MA
Project Role:	Research Assistant
Researcher Identifier (e.g. ORCID ID):	
Nearest person month worked:	3.0
Contribution to Project:	Support of social network interview
Funding Support:	50%

**Has there been a change in the active other support of the PD/PI(s) or senior/key personnel since the last reporting period?**

The original Project Coordinator, Richard Fay, was replaced by our new Project Coordinator, Ashley Schuyler, effective 10/3/2016.

- **What other organizations were involved as partners?**
  - N/A

## 8. SPECIAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

### o COLLABORATIVE AWARDS:

- Goldbach: PT140083, W81XWH-15-1-0699
- Holloway: PT140083P1, W81XWH-15-1-0700
- Castro: PT140083P2, W81XWH-15-1-0701

### o QUAD CHARTS:

#### Improving Acceptance, Integration, and Health among LGBT Service Members



PI: Goldbach, Jeremy

Org: University of Southern California

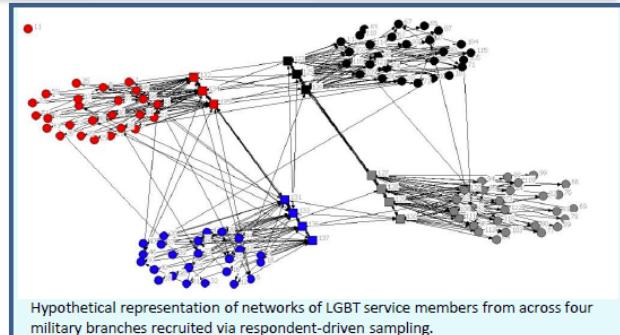
Award Amount: \$1,050,000

##### Study/Product Aim(s)

- Aim 1. Determine the degree to which LGBT service members are accepted and integrated into the military. Determine key factors that facilitate/impede this process.
- Aim 2. Determine if there are health disparities (both physical and psychological) between LGBT and non-LGBT service members and determine key factors responsible for these health disparities.
- Aim 3. Develop actionable recommendations that can facilitate LGBT acceptance/integration, and reduce disparities.

##### Approach

We will establish both a military and scientific advisory board to guide the entire project, conduct in-depth interviews with LGBT service-members to finalize survey instruments, and then recruit a matched cohort of heterosexual military personnel to examine factors that are associated with social acceptance and integration to develop actionable recommendations



#### Timeline and Cost

Activities	FY	16	17	N/A	N/A
Phase 1: Conduct informant interviews					
Phase 2: Conduct social network interviews, and data collection					
Complete data analysis					
Phase 3: Develop recommendations					
Produce Final Report					
<b>Estimated Budget (1,860k)</b>		<b>\$910k</b>	<b>\$950k</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

#### Goals/Milestones

**FY16 Goal** – Complete Phase 1 – Interviews, protocols, etc.

IRB and NIH Certificate of Confidentiality obtained

Advisory Boards established

Qualitative interview instrument finalized

Qualitative interviews completed and analyzed

Survey instruments finalized

Phase 2 – RDS Study

Begin RDS recruitment

**FY17 Goals** – Complete Phase 2 (RDS) and Phase 3 (Produce Recommendations)

Complete RDS Study

Complete social network analyses

Develop final report with actionable recommendations

#### Comments/Challenges/Issues/Concerns

- Protecting subject anonymity.

Updated: 12 October 2016

## 9. APPENDICES:

### a. Life History Calendar

Military Interest (Create "Blocks" Here)				
Years in Service, Enlistment Experiences				
<b>LANDMARKS</b>				
Major Life Events (Holidays, etc)				
Military Events: Enlistment/Deployment				
Living Situation / Assignment				
<b>LGBT IDENTITY</b>				
Sexual Identity				
Sexual Identity Disclosures				
Gender Identity				
Gender Identity Disclosures				
Dating / Behavior				
<b>MILITARY IDENTITY</b>				
View of Self in Military				
View of Others in Military				
<b>RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY</b>				
Experience of R/E in Military				
<b>HARASSMENT / HAZING</b>				
Harassment Experienced or Seen				
<b>HOME LIFE</b>				
Family and Partners				
Reactions by Family				
<b>PEERS and SUPPORT</b>				
Friends - within and Outside				
Friends Reactions (Within and Outside)				
Fitting into the Military Culture				
<b>UNIT CLIMATE</b>				
Coming Out / Unit Climate				
<b>SPIRITUALITY (faith affiliation)</b>				
Importance of Faith in the Military				
Use of Chaplain Services				
<b>HEALTH</b>				
Experiences of Physical Health Care				
Mental Health Experiences				
<b>ACCEPTANCE &amp; INTEGRATION</b>				
Integration / Positive Experiences				

**b. Social Network Interview**

## **Improving Acceptance, Integration and Health among LGBT Service Members**

### **Draft Social Network Interview (SNI) SNI Initial Prompt for Alters (Name Generator)**

**Prompt:** Please name five people with whom you discuss important matters. These should be people that you know and who know you. These should be people you have had contact with in the past 3 months or so – either in person, by phone (including text message), mail or email, or online (e.g., through social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube).

You can name anyone you know or who know you, no matter whom they are or where they live.

You can give me their first names, nicknames or initials – please do not give me last names. We want to protect the privacy of these people.

#### **Individual Attributes (i.e., what we want to know for each person named)**

- 1) How old is each person? (in years)
- 2) What is each person's race/ethnicity? (African American/black, Hispanic/Latino, Caucasian/white, Native American, Asian, Pacific Islander, Mixed, Other)
- 3) What is each person's gender? (male, female, trans man, trans woman)?
- 4) Who has graduated from high school? Who has a college degree?
- 5) Who lives within 50 miles of where you're located?
- 6) How long have you known each of these people? (days, weeks, months, or years)
- 7) Where appropriate, who is a relative? (biological, foster, step, adoptive; parent, sibling, cousin, aunt/uncle, grandparent, child)
- 8) Who is a current boyfriend/girlfriend/husband/wife/romantic/sexual partner? (you may list more than one)

#### **Collective Questions (i.e., with all names showing, who does what)**

- 9) Who on this list did you first meet online?
- 10) Who do you talk to in person or on the phone at least once per week?
- 11) Who do you text or email with at least once per week?
- 12) Who do you communicate with via a social network site at least once a week (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube)?
- 13) Who do you communicate with via an LGBT-focused military listserv (e.g., OutServe)?
- 14) Who on this list would you call a friend?
- 15) Who is gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, or questioning?
- 16) Who on this list knows that you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, or questioning? (for LGBT service members)
- 17) Who on this list knows that you are transgender? (for transgender service members)
- 18) Who is a counselor, psychologist, or social worker?
- 19) Who is a military chaplain?
- 20) Who is a civilian religious or spiritual advisor?
- 21) Who on this list is a military medical professional?
- 22) Who on this list is a civilian medical professional?

#### **Substance Use**

- 23) In the past month, who has drank alcohol to the point of drunkenness?

- 24) In the past month, who have you drank alcohol with to the point of drunkenness?
- 25) In the past month, who has used any illegal drug (e.g., cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine)?
- 26) In the past month, who have you used any illegal drug with?

**Definition: Prescription Drug Misuse is taking a prescription drug without a doctor's prescription, or using more of the drug or taking the drug more often than prescribed. Prescription drugs may include OxyContin, Percocet, Vicodin, codeine, Adderall, Ritalin, or Xanax. Do not include over-the-counter medications that can be purchased without a prescription.**

- 27) In the past month, who has misused prescription drugs?
- 28) In the past month, who have you misused prescription drugs with?
- 29) In the past month, who has misused over-the-counter (OTC) drugs?
- 30) In the past month, who has misused over-the-counter (OTC) drugs with?
- 31) Who have you ever talked to about drinking, taking drugs, or partying?

#### **Military Service (asked only of military involved network members)**

**Intro: For the next several questions, we are only interested in people who are involved in the military:**

- 32) Who on this list is active duty military?
- 33) Who on this list is former military (i.e., veteran)?
- 34) Who do you talk to about military matters?
- 35) Who do you talk to about career issues?
- 36) Who on this list is enlisted?
- 37) Who on this list is in your military unit?
- 38) Who on this list is senior in rank to you?
- 39) Who on this list is Junior in rank to you?
- 40) Who on this list is a battle buddy, wing man, etc?
- 41) Who on this list made you feel welcomed when you joined the military?
- 42) Who on this list have you been, deployed with, at sea with or on long-training exercises with?
- 43) Who on this list do you talk to about what it's like to be LGBT in the military? (for LGBT service members)
- 44) Who on this list would be morally opposed to LGBT people serving in the military?

#### **Pro-social connections**

- 45) Who do you talk to when you have questions about a healthcare issue?
- 46) Who do you do fun things with, hang out with,
- 47) Who do you talk to about problems or stressful things in your personal life?
- 48) Who could you confide in?
- 49) Who do you trust to keep a secret?
- 50) Who do you go to when you need help or advice?
- 51) Who can you count on to listen to you when you need to talk, or is someone you can confide in?
- 52) Who could you borrow \$100 from if you needed it?

#### **Network Connections (i.e., who knows who)**

- 53) Now, I'd like to ask you who in your network knows each other (series of questions does X know X?)

**c. Expert Advisory Panel Roster**

**MAP Study Expert Advisory Panel Roster**

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